The Market Bugle: Loud, Repeat Loud

By Larry Harrison
Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

As everybody knows, this is the day of the high pressure merchandiser. With gigantic campaigns on television, radio and other media, he is out to persuade the consuming public to buy—buy—buy!

The consumer is not aware of the vast and noisy celebrations that go into the making of a commercial. He is the ripe prospect for craftsmen who spin out symbols hopefully to convince that their product or service satisfies needs the most.

Many merchandisers claim "if it's not sexy, it's no good!" and hammer out their message with the urgency of a police call.

How to judge the public mood always has been a problem, although it's reduced pretty much to a science these days.

At the tribal meetings of certain primitive societies, the presiding chief was supposed to determine the prevailing mood of opinion by listening to the approving or disapproving clamor of drums set up by attending elders.

Nowadays in the United States, the same sort of process has refined himself into the science and profession of public opinion measurament.

The drums have given away to IBM machines, flashing control panels of electronic calculators, and small armies of Ph.D's from commercial opinion polling companies.

In many cases the experts recommend a relaxed "sell". Then there have been triumphs in commercial promotions in which the "sell" in ads and symbols was relaxed in spelling out consumer satisfaction.

The nation has taken into its memory these oft-repeated symbols—and, of course, it has taken into its home or business the manufacturer's products or services.

Another advertising symbol with which millions of people are familiar is little Johnny Roventini, the Philip Morris Page created in the heyday of radio commercials. His portrait was on Philip Morris packs.

At the start of each PM sponsored program, Johnny would say "this is Johnny, stepping out of thousands of store windows all over the country."

At conclusion of the broadcast he would say "this is Johnny again returning now to the thousands of store windows and counters all over America. Look for me, I'll be waiting for you. CALL FOR PHILIP MORRIS!"

The opening key to each pro-

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Symbol of the ad technique, Johnny still shouts out for Phillips Morris after 35 years.

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gram was "Johnny Presents . . .," as when Johnny presented Great Moments From Great Plays, the Philip Morris Frolics and the great dramatic show of the radio era, The Philip Morris Playhouse.

The diminutive page boy was first heard on April 17, 1933, on the Ferde Grofe Show, an evening program built around the composer's orchestra, billed in the Philips Morris trade announcements as "The finest orchestra that ever struck Broadway."

From the very first evening, Johnny's perfect B-flat blended with Ferde Grofe's "Grand Canyoun Canyon Suite" ("On the Trail"), with its dominant E-flat, and a new, unique sound had entered the folklore of American advertising.

Ever since Johnny was discovered he has enjoyed a rewarding, life-long contract. And even today, he makes frequent personal appearances on behalf of the PM company.

He was honored recently for his 35 years as an advertising symbol, with a gala gathering of PM executives, movie and TV personalities in Palm Springs.

PM president George Weissman acknowledged Johnny's contributions and said:

"When Johnny joined us, Philip Morris produced $3,000,000 in sales. Today, we are going over the billion dollar mark.

"Johnny has been a living trademark now for 35 years. PM cigarets and our later brands' sales successes can be attributed in great part to the fine image Johnny Phillip Morris has protrayed."

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